



The Pope of Bourbon Street Rip Naquin offers his "holy" ring to the Lord of Misrule Frank Perez of the Mystik Krewe du Rue Royale Revelers upon his arrival to "officially" crown the krewe's Grand Reveler II in New Orleans on 12th Night.



The Cheese Queen of New Orleans Felicia Phillips attempts to kiss the Pope of Bourbon Street's "holy" ring when the devil possessed within her makes the Pope hat deflate, one of her attributes from her many days at the "ballet" on St. Louis Street.



Will Antil was crowned Grand Reveler II by the Pope of Bourbon Street Rip Naquin under the direction of Mystik Krewe du Rue Royale Revelers' Lord of Misrule Frank Perez with lieutenants Tommy Kelly and Phillip Smowers in attendance for ceremonies at the corner of Rue Royale and St. Ann at Perez's 3rd 12th Night bash.



King Barkus XXIV Alex (left), the son of Diane Lundeen, will lead the 24th Mystic Krewe of Barkus Parade on Sunday, Jan. 31 celebrating "From The Dog House to the White House" in New Orleans' historic French Quarter. Visit www.Barkus.org for additional information.



Barney Williams and Eric Wallace, who are planning a June wedding at City Park in New Orleans, celebrate gaining full custody of Baby Ryan.



Mystik Krewe du Rue Royale Revelers' Grand Reveler I Jeffrey Palmquist, world famous bartender at Cafe Lafitte in Exile, serves up the best Bloody Mary on Bourbon Street complete with the "whole" salad on Sundays in New Orleans!

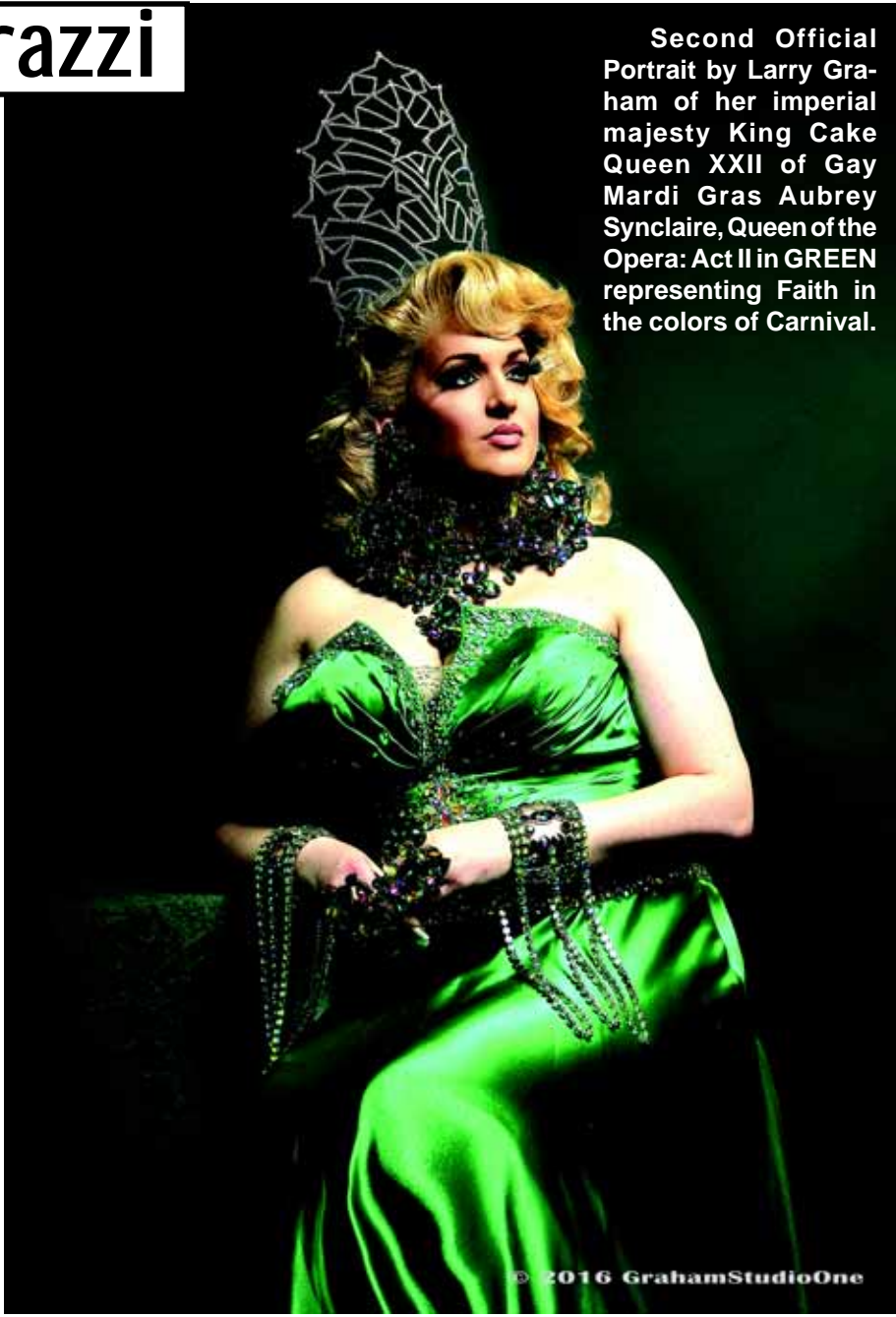


Following the coronation of Grand Reveler II, the Meeting of the Royal Courts commenced with King Cake Queen XXII - Queen of the Opera: Act II Aubrey Synclaire and co-captain Marsha Delain representing the Krewe of Queenateenas, and Grand Reveler II Will Antil and Lord of Misrule Frank Perez representing the Mystik Krewe du Rue Royale Revelers on 12th Night.



The Big Easy Sisters of the Muddy Waters hosted their 3rd Annual Sister Gras at GrandPre's in New Orleans raising \$1,422 for the different charities the Sisters patronize. A special thanks to entertainers who came and gave their time to make it a wonderful success including Misti Ates, Coca Mesa, Sable Nicole Starr, Eureka Starfish aka Benjamin Murray, Jack Inman and Solitaire Confinement aka Bonita Folse. (Photo by Roy Guste)

celebrazzi



Second Official Portrait by Larry Graham of her imperial majesty King Cake Queen XXII of Gay Mardi Gras Aubrey Synclaire, Queen of the Opera: Act II in GREEN representing Faith in the colors of Carnival.

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the real cheese

by Felicia Phillips
Email: fphillips1011@gmail.com
Photo by Hubert S Monkeys

Weddings & Wanderings

Hopefully some of you may have noticed that "The Real Cheese" was missing in action the last couple of issues. Well I would love to say it was because I had been drag napped and sold into sex slavery by a group of East European human traffickers that cater to those with a fetish for well aged cross dressers, but that would be stretching the truth a tad bit. The truth is layered though, consisting of the winter crud, a virus ridden computer likely caused by looking for porn sites hiring afore mentioned well aged cross dressers, and just old fashion procrastination which is something I have mastered.

Have no doubt though, I have experienced enough over the holidays to have stories for months to come. I will try to condense the highlights as well as the lowlights for you now. I will begin with my attendance of the Royal Wedding of Mike (Opal Masters) Moreau and Darwin Reed, definitely a highlight. Not only was it to be a historic event, but it also saw the return, (one night only appearance) of eccentric handsome young artist and often muse or catalyst to many of my past escapades, Madison Faile! Having him as my escort assured that it would be quite the eventful night.

The first person we see upon arriving at the church was costume designer extraordinaire John Zeringue leading me to imagine the couple and all the wedding party parading down the aisle in feathered collars and headpieces, with a grin he told me no not quite. I was so happy to see

friends Tip and Gary who I had not seen in weeks as they are world travelers! Now not to mention any names including myself, for a second I feared of lighting striking as someone did ask for a vodka and holy water, ok yes it was me, but only because it had been a long day.

For any in attendance that may have been unsure of attending a same sex marriage in a church, they were quickly put at ease by Rev. Bill Terry and the members of St. Anna's Church. He used humor in the most enlightening way, I can't express how comfortable and welcomed he made me feel. Part of me expected to see Opal in full wedding gown attire, but it was Mike who appeared with longtime partner Darwin, although his tux was one that would have made Liberace proud! They both were more than handsome. The only potential faux pas was from myself when asking for more wine during communion.

The reception that followed was oh so lavish, food was fabulous, featuring Rip and Marsha's now famous smoked pheasant and duck gumbo!!! People were now loosening up and enjoying adult beverages and socializing with a most diverse crowd of guests which included former Miss Gay America Patti La Plae Safe. Now while the wedding party was enjoying a Dom Perignon toast in the parlor, Madison, myself and another former MGA (who shall remain nameless because she is a good Christian that I love) were in the kitchen happily finishing off a couple bottles of the cheaper bubbly!

As usual after sharing champagne with young Mr. Faile, the rest is a little blurry, but we end up in a group led by lovable Dr. George and including young power couple and Instagram superstars Jonathon Molina and Ray Conard. First stop Oz for a cocktail with hunky Cameron who along with his lovely wife joined our little impromptu bar crawl. Out to the streets we went, passing thru the Pub and then over to the Itch where Madison managed to sweet talk Julian into letting him take a champagne glass out on the rest of our venture.

Dr. George was all about cabs from then on, he literally had one waiting at every stop, next which was The Golden Lantern to catch some of the MGL Pageant. I hear it ended up being epic, but I can only recount for what I saw while there, which was Judge Dominique DeLorean looking ravishing and Judge Tami Tarmac sporting a new hairdo that I have now dubbed the Tower of Tarmac, if I could have climbed up on top of that masterpiece I swear I could have seen the Canadian Border. Only part of the competition I saw was evening gown,

first young blond bombshell Karli LaCorre, elegant and radiant in gold, and then Reba Douglas herself, well put together in black with her trademark red locks. I do remember congratulating Monica Synclaire-Kennedy on her passionate and nothing but class reign this past year, and on the way out giving a shout to Rikki Redd who was sporting a snappy little red dance outfit with legs for days.

Back in the cab we talked the entire group into helping us make donations to our scholarship funds at the Corner Pocket, now I was really going to consult The Oracle of Drag, Lisa Beaumann on all the craziness going on in the Drag Matrix. I'm pretty sure we were having lots of good wholesome fun, especially outside while waiting for the cab and explaining to Cameron's wife what it means to pass the government cheese and why it would in the Christmas spirit if we passed some to her husband.

In the midst of all this I realize that the voice of gay reason, adorable friend Cody Chauvin has joined the group mainly to give hope to wayward souls like me and others, that if we find a good husband like he had, we could be home at a decent hour, with money still in our pockets, safe and sound and with no hangover the next day. It would take a couple of more stops before reason won out and would see us all safely home, but not before I heard the quote of the night, while the group was going their own ways, I hear; "Get your hand out of my ass!" To which I hear replied, "Oh I'm sorry I didn't know where my hand was!" This was not at all lascivious but quite funny, but I guess

[continued on 10]

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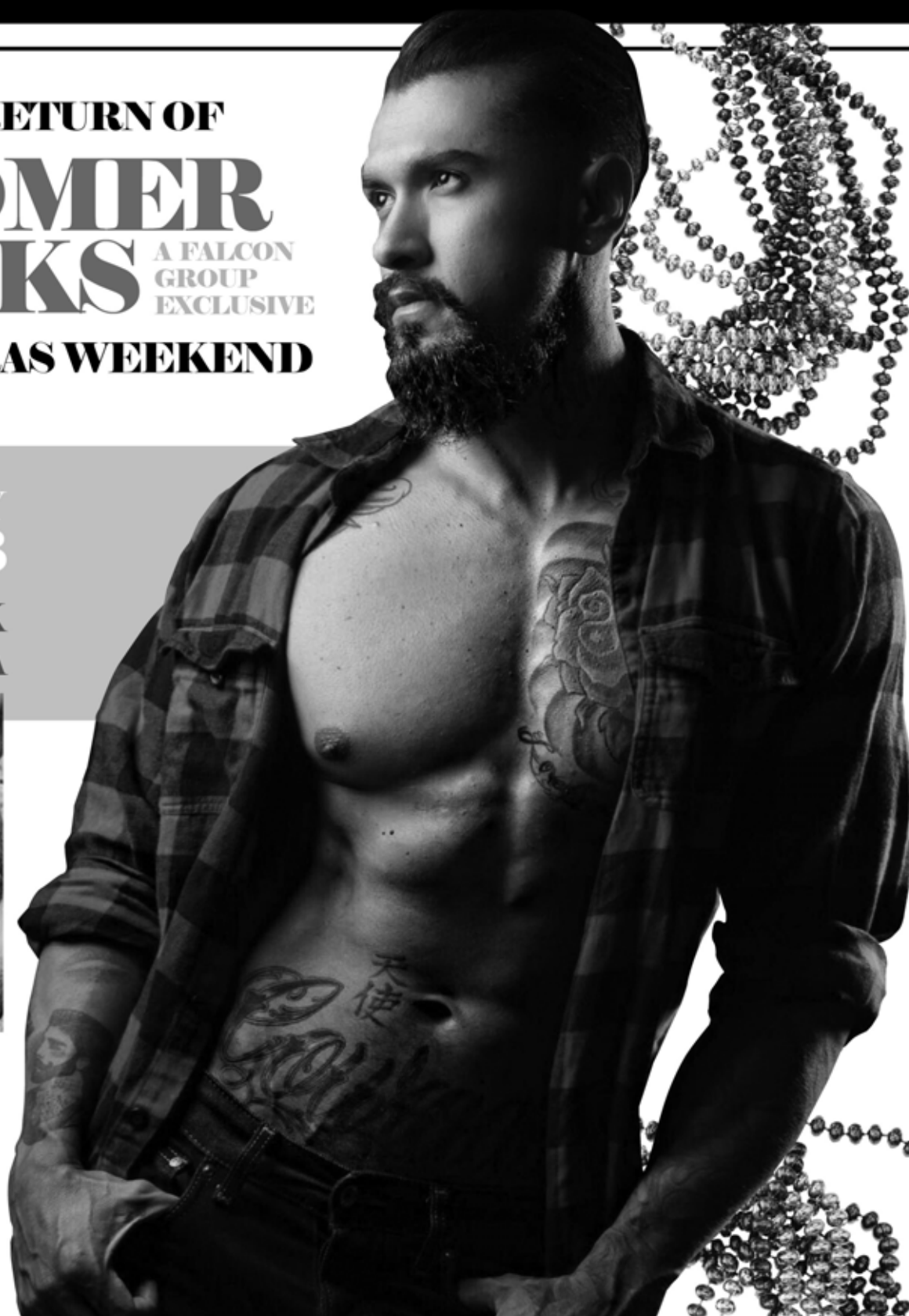


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moments in gay new orleans history

by Professor Frank Perez
E-mail: f.perez@sbcglobal.net
Photo by: Larry Graham, GrahamStudioOne.COM

“My First Three Gay Weddings”

Same sex marriage has been legal for over six months now and despite the warnings of the religious right, Western Civilization has not crumbled into ashes and been swallowed into the fiery bowels of hell. Since the landmark Supreme Court decision, I have attended three same-sex wedding ceremonies.

The first was the wedding of Charles Paul and Pete Pietens. Their ceremony was held at the Faerie Playhouse—the iconic 200 year old Creole Cottage with the red hearts on Esplanade Avenue. The Faerie Playhouse is not only the longtime home of legendary LGBT+ activist Stewart Butler and his late partner Alfred Doolittle, it has also, over the decades, served as a meeting place for a number of important community organizations including LAGPAC in the early 1980s and more recently, the LGBT+ Archives Project of Louisiana. Charles and Pete’s wedding was in the rear courtyard adjacent to the Memorial Garden, where the partial remains of a number of important LGBT figures are buried, including Charlene Schneider, John Ognibene, Cliff Howard, and J.B. Harter.

Charles and Pete have been committed to each other for twenty years and although they live and work in Fort Worth, Texas, they spend much of the year at their second home in New Orleans. The wedding ceremony was preceded (and fol-

lowed) by a party for roughly 60 or so friends and family. It was warm, casual affair devoid of any religious overtones.

The second wedding I attended was a more traditional ceremony. Darwin Reed and Mike Moreau (aka Opal Masters), together for 40+ years, tied the knot at St. Anna’s Episcopal Church, which happens to be across the street from the Faerie Playhouse. This was the first state sanctioned same sex wedding performed at St. Anna’s. The ceremony was followed by a reception at the Ambush Mansion.

Mike and Darwin met in 1975 at Travis’, a gay bar on North Rampart where GrandPre’s now is. Upon first seeing Darwin, Mike remembers, “I saw him in the bar and chased him around until he asked me to dance.” The two became friends for a few months until one night they decided to



consummate their relationship. As they arrived at Mike’s home, Mike told Darwin, “This is a one night thing. I’m not looking for anything permanent.” Not long thereafter, the two moved in together and have shared each other’s lives ever since. Darwin and Mike are currently reigning as the King and Queen 50 of Amon-Ra; Mike is a charter member of the gay Carnival krewe, which was founded in 1965.

While Charles and Pete’s wedding was laid back and casual and Darwin and Mike’s was more formal and traditional, Otis Fury and Thomas Metzger’s ceremony was somewhere in the middle. Held at Café Istanbul in the New Orleans Healing Center and billed as “T.J. and Otis’ Big Gay Masquerade Wedding,” this afternoon fete featured an open bar, a fantastic spread of food and a plethora of interesting maskers. It was quirky and fun. Otis and T. J. have been together ten years and work as bartenders at the Double Play.

All three weddings were beautiful and moving and legal. Legal. That’s the thing the hard-core religious folk could never wrap their heads around. My friends and thousands others like them never wanted to destroy the institution of marriage; they wanted to join it—not only to obtain a publicly recognized validation of their already cemented relationships but also for the multitude of legal benefits now afforded to them.

On a personal note, before the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage, I hated going to weddings. I didn’t like having to dress up for them and I’ve never felt entirely comfortable in churches. The religious services that accompanied the ceremonies usually bored or offended me.

And the stuffy receptions were typically filled with people I didn’t want to be around in the first place. But my experiences at the three gay weddings have attended have changed my attitude a bit. In fact, I’ve come to the conclusion that gay weddings may end up saving the institution of marriage—or at least wedding ceremonies.

As for the religious objectors, the sky is not falling and the world is not ending. Not yet at least. I’ll start worrying about that when “Gay Divorce Court” airs on cable.

the real cheese ...from 8

you would just have had to be there.

I know that Cody, having showed up just in the nick of gay times saw to it that Madison and everyone got home safely, And I’m pretty sure that included me, however after arriving home, I somehow ended up across the street at my favorite undisclosed location, in fact the one where the Real Cheese was born (Thanks Aubrey, you bitch!) Holding court with another guest from the earlier Royal Wedding, Elizabeth Bouvier. I can guarantee that no one there could comprehend any of our words by this time, but I assure you all were likely profound.

All this being recounted I guess what I see now upon reflection is that in our evolving gay world, there will be older people that will now be able to share their love and time on earth legally, and younger couples that can be as wise, and those like myself who are somewhere in the middle, discussing it all over a few cocktails while continuing to cut up! And that my dahlin is The Real Cheese!

Till next time, I’m Felicia Phillips, The Cheese Queen of New Orleans...